

until it contacted the Patent Office and requested the same. Correction of the PTO records is respectfully requested.

With regard to the objection to the drawings, Applicant agrees with the Examiner that “the drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims.” However, Applicant respectfully submits that the bypass or shorting circuit is not specified in the claims and therefore need not be shown in the drawing.

The Examiner rejects the claims under Section 112 for use of the term “twinkle bulb” (not a common term used in the art), the terms “standard bulb” and “non-standard twinkle bulb” (need to be distinguished from each other), and the terms “standard bulb socket” and “non-standard bulb socket” (not clearly distinguished).

Applicant respectfully submits that a “flashing bulb” and a “twinkle bulb” differ in structure and function as set forth in detail by Applicant in the Specification (at pg. 1, ln. 22--pg. 3, ln. 5), and each presents different problems (see pg. 3, ln. 6--pg. 4, ln. 2). The UL distinguishes between the two (see pg. 1, ln. 6-21), and so should the Examiner. The term “twinkle bulb” conveys the intended meaning (as set forth in the Specification), and Applicant is not constrained to adopt another term preferred by the Examiner or even the most common term in the art.

Applicant specifically rejects use of the term “control bulb” as the twinkle bulb (unlike a flashing bulb) is NOT a “control” bulb since it cannot cause other bulbs in a series circuit therewith to twinkle.

The "standard bulb" is neither a flashing bulb nor a twinkle bulb (but rather a steady state, always on or always off bulb). The "non-standard twinkle bulb" characterization is admittedly somewhat redundant as a "twinkle bulb" is as by definition a "non-standard bulb," but Applicant simply wanted to clarify the difference in the bulbs by the different functions of the bulbs. If the Examiner prefers, Applicant is willing to substitute for the term "standard bulb" the term "standard non-twinkle bulb."

Precisely how the standard and non-standard bulbs differ from one another in their structure and/or how the standard bulb socket and the non-standard bulb socket differ from one another in their structure are not critical features of the present invention as defined in Claim 1, except insofar as the non-standard bulb can be operatively received only in the non-standard bulb socket and the standard bulb can be operatively received only in the standard bulb socket.

If the Examiner interprets the limitation "standard bulb socket" to mean a "socket for a commonly known miniature decorative lamp," he should also interpret the limitation "non-standard bulb socket" to mean "a socket for a commonly known miniature decorative twinkle lamp," for the reasons set forth hereinabove.

Claims 1-8 are rejected as unpatentable over Wang U.S. 5,828,183 in view of Wang U.S. 5,969,469 and Tsui U.S. 5,967,823.

The primary relevance of Wang '183 discloses a flash control circuit for a decorative light string wherein, as acknowledged by the Examiner, there is no teaching of "configuration including dimensions of sockets for a standard bulb and that for a non-

standard twinkle bulb.” Indeed, FIG. 2 does not show the bulb sockets at all (but only the bulbs), while the prior art illustration of FIG. 1 shows only identical lamp sockets.

The secondary reference of Wang ‘469 shows lamp sockets for standard bulbs, but it does not suggest that these would vary in any fashion from the lamp sockets for non-standard or twinkling bulbs. Indeed, there does not appear to be any reference at all to non-standard or twinkling bulbs in Wang ‘469.

The Examiner interprets the tertiary reference of Tsui as showing “a socket for a flashing lamp 22.” In fact, FIG. 2 shows bulb holders 20 containing sockets 22 (Col. 3, line 62--Col. 4, line 19) and bulbs 40. At the very most, Tsui FIG. 2 shows the use of the same bulb holders 20 and bulb sockets 22 for all the bulbs 40 of the circuit. There is no teaching that bulbs different from bulb 40 would be used in different bulb holders 20 or different bulb sockets 22. Accordingly, at the very most the secondary and tertiary references show that different types of bulbs may be employed with different types of sockets. This is well known--for example, a miniature bulb socket clearly differs from a large bulb socket.

More importantly, Applicant questions whether Tsui shows a twinkle bulb at all. Tsui does not suggest that the bulb is in any way non-standard. Rather, Tsui shows an electric belt extending through the base of various bulb holders in such a way as to cause flashing (see Col. 4, lines 15-46). If Applicant is correct, Tsui shows a bulb socket which differs from the bulb socket of the Wang ‘469 Patent not because it receives a twinkle bulb, but rather because it is designed to make a standard non-flashing, non-twinkling, bulb flash or twinkle due to interruptions in the power supply to the sockets.

And, most importantly, Applicant notes that, since none of the references uses a
twinkle bulb specifically (but rather at most a flashing control bulb), there would be no
reason for any of the references to utilize different bulb sockets for the standard bulbs
and the flashing bulbs. The need for different sockets is simply to ensure compliance
with a recently enacted UL regulation (Section 588) which applies only to twinkle bulbs,
and not to “flashing control bulbs” of the type contemplated by the Examiner.

To summarize, Applicant respectfully submits that the secondary and tertiary
references do not remedy the deficiency of the primary reference because they do not
teach that the socket dimensions for a standard bulb and a twinkle bulb should differ.
Further, the application has not been properly examined since the Examiner considered
“a twinkle bulb as a flashing control bulb” without regard to the art-recognized
distinction between the flashing control bulb of Section 5.16 and the twinkle bulb of
Section 5.17 of UL Standard 588 (see specification page-1, lines 6-21).

In view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the rejection
and allowance of all claims is respectfully requested.


If an extension of time is required to enable this document to be timely filed and
there is no separate Request for Extension of Time, this document is to be construed as
also constituting a Request for Extension of Time Under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a) for a period
of time sufficient to enable this document to be timely filed. Any fee required for such a
Request for Extension of Time and any other fee required by this document pursuant to
37 C.F.R. §§1.16 and 1.17 and not submitted herewith should be charged to the Deposit

Account of the undersigned attorneys, Account No. 01-1785; any refund should be credited to the same account. One copy of this document is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,

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